

Message Text

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ATTN COUNSELOR NIMETZ

FOLLOWING REPEAT ANKARA 3401 ACTION SECSTATE INFO ATHENS
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O N F I D E N T I A L ANAKARA 3401

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, TU, US

SUBJECT: MUMTAZ SOYSAL EXPRESSES DOUBTS ABOUT LIFTING OF THE
EMBARGO

1. SUMMARY: MUMTAZ SOYSAL HAS DURING PAST WEEK PUBLICLY
EXPRESSED DOUBTS ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR LIFTING THE EMBARGO
AND ASSERTED NON-LIFTING WOULD SERVE TURKEY'S LONG-TERM
INTERESTS. SOYSAL'S COMMENTS RAISE SOME DISTURBING QUESTIONS
ABOUT HIS ROLE AND MOTIVES. END SUMMARY.

2. THE SELECTION OF MUMTAZ SOYSAL TO ASSIST THE TURKISH
CYPRIOTS IN THE PREPARATION OF THEIR PROPOSALS ON CYPRUS
WAS GENERALLY REGARDED AS A SHREWD DECISION BY ECEVIT.
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DOMESTICALLY, SOYSAL'S UNQUESTIONED LEFTIST (AND ANTI-NATO)
CREDENTIALS PROTECTED HIM AND ECEVIT AGAINST THE POSSIBILITY
OF ACCUSATIONS OF DESIGNING THE PROPOSALS TO SATISFY THE
US AND THUS VIOLATING ECEVIT'S DECLARED DE-LINKING OF
CYPRUS AND THE EMBARGO. INTERNATIONALLY, SOYSAL'S POSITION
AS VICE PRESIDENT OF AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AND HIS QUIET,
PROFESSORIAL Demeanor BELIED THE IMAGE OF THE TERRIBLE TURK

GIVING A NEEDED BOOST TO TURKEY'S VERY POOR PUBLIC RELATIONS POSITION.

3. SOYSAL'S PERFORMANCE OVER THE LAST FEW WEEKS HAS GENERALLY BORNE OUT THE INITIAL POSITIVE ASSESSMENT OF ECEVIT'S DECISION TO SELECT HIM TO ASSIST THE TURKISH CYPRIOTS. NEVERTHELESS, DURING THE LAST WEEK SOYSAL HAS GIVEN AN INTERVIEW TO TURKISH RADIO AND TELEVISION (TRT) AND HAS WRITTEN THREE COMMENTARIES FOR PRO-GOVERNMENT MILLIYET WHICH CAUSE US TO WONDER IF SOYSAL'S ROLE IS A POSITIVE ONE FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF US INTERESTS.

4. IN HIS INTERVIEW WITH A TRT REPORTER IN WASHINGTON, WHICH WAS BROADCAST APRIL 28, SOYSAL SAID HIS CONTACTS IN WASHINGTON HAVE BEEN USEFUL, BUT HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT CONGRESS WOULD BE PERSUADED TO LIFT THE ARMS EMBARGO. THIS NON-LIFTING, SOYSAL SAID, WOULD BE IN THE LONG-TERM INTERESTS OF TURKEY.

5. IN THE APRIL 29 EDITION OF MILLIYET, SOYSAL EXPANDED HIS ARGUMENT. HE SAID THERE WAS NO NEED TO BEG THE AMERICANS FOR ARMS -- NOR TO BEG THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION NOR THE CONGRESS. THE EMBARGO HAD BROUGHT GREAT BENEFIT TO TURKEY BY FORCING IT TO FACE THE QUESTION OF WHETHER OR NOT IT IS IN TURKEY'S BENEFIT TO CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN THE "LARGEST GROUND FORCE IN THE WEST". HE DISMISSED THE ARGUMENT THAT

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THE WEAKENING OF THE SOUTHERN FLANK OF NATO INCREASES THE DANGER OF WAR. TURKEY, HE SAID, MUST ONLY CONCERN ITSELF WITH THE QUESTION OF WHETHER IT WILL BE STRONG ENOUGH TO PROTECT ITS OWN INTERESTS. THE LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO MIGHT SERVE THE SHORT-TERM INTERESTS OF TURKEY BUT NOT THE LONG-TERM INTERESTS. SOYSAL SAID THAT THOSE WHO ARE TRYING TO USE THE EMBARGO TO GET TURKEY TO PULL OUT OF CYPRUS WILL BE UNSUCCESSFUL BECAUSE THE TURKISH PROPOSALS ON CYPRUS WILL NOT CHANGE UNTIL BOTH SIDES SIT DOWN AT THE NEGOTIATING TABLE. SOYSAL SUGGESTED THAT THE BEST WAY TO FOIL THOSE WHO EXPECT THE EMBARGO TO BRING TURKEY TO ITS KNEES IS TO "THUMB ONE'S NOSE AT THE EMBARGO".

6. IN THE MAY 2 EDITION OF MILLIYET, SOYSAL DECRIED THE LOBBYING SYSTEM IN WASHINGTON AND CONCLUDED THAT THE TURKS COULD NOT WIN A LOBBYING BATTLE. HE ASKED THE QUESTION OF WHETHER IT WAS REALLY WORTH THE EFFORT TO TRY TO LIFT THE EMBARGO. "IS IT WORTH RUNNING AFTER THE WASHINGTON LOBBYISTS TO HAVE AN EMBARGO LIFTED ON WEAPONS WHICH TURKEY CANNOT FREELY USE WHEN HER NATIONAL INTERESTS ARE INVOLVED IN THE AEGEAN AND THE MEDITERRANEAN?"

7. IN A THIRD COLUMN PUBLISHED MAY 3, SOYSAL EXPLAINED WHY THE EFFORTS OF SENATORS SARBANES AND EAGLETON AND CONGRESSMEN BRADEMAS AND ROSENTHAL ARE LIKELY TO BE SUCCESSFUL. HE RIDICULED THE EFFORTS TO USE "RETIRED ADMIRALS AND GENERALS OF CONSIDERABLE AGE AND SOMEWHAT ADDLED MIND" TO ARGUE FOR REWARDING "TURKISH BRAVERY IN KOREA". SOYSAL FAVORABLY SINGLED OUT CONGRESSMAN SOLARZ AS A YOUNG AND AND DYNAMIC CONGRESSMAN WHO WAS WORKING TO LIFT THE EMBARGO. HE CONCLUDED, HOWEVER, THAT THE EFFORT TO LIFT THE EMBARGO WOULD NOT BE WON UNLESS THE ADMINISTRATION, INCLUDING PRESIDENT CARTER, MADE AN ALL-OUT EFFORT. HE QUESTIONED WHETHER THE ADMINISTRATION REALLY WANTED A LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO AND SUGGESTED THAT IT WAS IN FACT SIMPLY TRYING TO WRING FURTHER CONCESSIONS IN CYPRUS OUT OF THE TURKS. SOYSAL SAID THIS
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"GAME WITHIN THE GAME" WOULD NOT SUCCEED AND CONCLUDED BY ASKING ONCE AGAIN WHETHER IT WAS IN TURKEY'S INTERESTS TO "BEG AT ANOTHER'S DOOR FOR ARMS WE CANNOT USE FOR OUR OWN INTERESTS".

8. SOYSAL'S COMMENTS HAVE DRAWN THE FIRE OF HURRIYET (MASS CIRCULATION, INDEPENDENT) COLUMNIST CUNEYT ARCA YUREK WHO ENTITLED HIS MAY 1 COLUMN, "WHO IS PROFESSOR SOYSAL SERVING?". ARCA YUREK'S COMPLAINT WAS TWO-FOLD. FIRST, THAT ALTHOUGH SOYSAL IS SUPPOSEDLY EMPLOYED AS AN ADVISOR BY THE TURKISH FEDERATED STATE OF CYPRUS, HE WAS NOW IN WASHINGTON TALKING ABOUT THE EMBARGO, AND SECOND, HE APPEARED TO BE MAKING STATEMENTS ABOUT THE EMBARGO THAT WERE INCONSISTENT WITH THE PUBLIC POSITION OF THE GOVERNMENT. ARCA YUREK CONCLUDED THAT IT WAS INAPPROPRIATE FOR SOYSAL TO EXPRESS HIS PERSONAL OPINIONS WHILE ON A PUBLIC MISSION. HE CHALLENGED THE IDEA THAT MAINTENANCE OF THE EMBARGO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF TURKEY AND SAID THAT SUCH A STATEMENT CREATED A TREMENDOUS CONTRADICTION WITHIN THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT. "IF I HAD BEEN IN SUCH CONTRADICTION WITHIN THE POLICIES OF MY NEWSPAPER, I WOULD HAVE BEEN SENT TO KARS (AN EASTERN BORDER PROVINCE) A LONG TIME AGO."

9. COMMENT: SOYSAL'S VIEW THAT THE EMBARGO WILL ULTIMATELY SERVE TURKEY'S NATIONAL INTERESTS IS NOT NEW. NEVERTHELESS, IN THE PAST FEW WEEKS HE HAD NOT EXPRESSED THOSE VIEWS, AND HIS DECISION TO SPEAK OUT AT THIS TIME RAISES DISTURBING QUESTIONS ABOUT HIS MOTIVES. BUT THE PROBLEM IS GREATER THAN THE REVERSION TO FORM OF A KNOWN OPPONENT OF STRONG TURKISH TIES WITH THE US. UNFORTUNATELY, SOYSAL'S VIEWS BOTH REFLECT AND NOURISH A FATALISTIC MOOD WE CONFRONT INCREASINGLY AMONG OUR CONTACTS IN ANKARA. INFLUENTIAL JOURNALISTS, MFA OFFICIALS, AND POLITICIANS ARE AMONG THOSE WHO SEEM TO BE WEARYING OF
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THE STRUGGLE TO LIFT THE EMBARGO. THEY DESPAIR OF EVER SATISFYING A CONGRESS WHICH THEY BELIEVE IS UNDER THE INFLUENCE TO THE CONTRARY, QUESTION THE ADMINISTRATION'S COMMITMENT TO ITS PROPOSALS. THEY ARE TIRED OF LIVING WITH PRESENT UNCERTAINTIES. PERSONS FORMERLY IDENTIFIED WITH A STRONG US/TURKISH RELATIONSHIP ARE INCREASINGLY CONCERNED THAT THEY HAVE BACKED THE WRONG HORSE. AND MANY WOULD JUST LIKE TO GET IT ALL OVER WITH. IF THE EMBARGO IS LIFTED THEY WILL BE PLEASED, BUT IF IT IS CONFIRMED THEY FEEL THEY WILL AT LEAST HAVE HAD A DECISION--AND THEY CAN BEGIN TO ADJUST TO THIS NEW REALITY. IT IS NOT A RATIONAL VIEW, BUT IT IS AN INCREASINGLY EXPRESSED VIEW. AND IT GAINS CREDENCE WITH REPETITION. SPIERS. UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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